

August 16, 2011

Marlene Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

*RE: In the Matter of applications of AT&T Inc. and Deutsche Telekom AG for consent to assign or Transfer Control of Licenses and Authorizations; (WT Proceeding – No. 11-65).*

Dear Commissioners:


Today's economy—like nearly everything else—is drastically different from a few decades ago. My organization, Southwest Michigan First, works to stimulate economic growth across the Kalamazoo region, and we focus our efforts on developing strategies and programs that will benefit our region now and into the future.

For example, our Community Capitalism approach has been nationally recognized, and it came about as a result of our commitment to embrace change. Instead of trying to attract new and large businesses to the area, we focused our economic development efforts on creating a pro-business environment that encouraged growth for new and existing businesses alike. Perhaps most importantly, our community works to create and nurture an infrastructure that entrepreneurs and businesses of all sizes can use as a launch pad for growth. The positive results of this new focus are tangible and impressive, and our community has benefitted greatly from the new and sustainable economic growth.

A key component to a sound infrastructure that stimulates this growth is the availability of advanced communications technology. Unfortunately, wireless broadband is not yet available in many areas here in Michigan and across the country. For instance, our region includes several rural and non-urban communities where high-speed mobile broadband is not yet a reality. The proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile will expand and enhance the wireless network infrastructure, resulting in improved coverage and quality, as well as a dramatically increased availability in Michigan.

The latest technology and a willingness to embrace change are crucial for economic growth. Across the country, high-speed wireless broadband has been proven to be a vital business tool. Businesses in Southwest Michigan deserve to have equal access to this tool for success, growth, opportunity, and development, and this merger can make that happen quickly. Thank you for your consideration.

Always forward,



Ron Kitchens  
Chief Executive Officer

CC: Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell